

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:

Claims 1-13 (canceled)

14. (currently amended) A microorganism transformed with a ~~gene construct containing the ilvD gene, the ilvBNC genes or both the ilvD gene and the ilvBNC genes~~ nucleotide sequence encoding dihydroxy acid dehydratase (ilvD), nucleotide sequences encoding acetohydroxy acid synthase and isomeroreductase (ilvBNC) or both ilvD and ilvBNC, in which microorganism the activity of one or more enzymes that are specifically involved in the synthesis of D-pantothenate is reduced or eliminated, wherein said one or more enzymes are selected from the group consisting of ~~panB, panC, panE and panD~~ ketopantoate hydroxymethyl transferase (panB), pantothenate ligase (panC), ketopantoic acid reductase (panE) and aspartate decarboxylase (panD) and said activity of said one or more enzymes is reduced or eliminated as a result of deletion of all or a part of the nucleotide sequence encoding said enzyme in said microorganism and wherein said microorganism is a *Corynebacterium* species.

15. (previously presented) The transformed microorganism according to Claim 14 in which the activity of the enzyme ketopantoate hydroxymethyl transferase (panB), the enzyme pantothenate ligase (panC) or both panB and panC is reduced or eliminated as a result of deletion of all or a part of the nucleotide sequence encoding said enzyme in said microorganism.

16. (previously presented) The transformed microorganism according to Claim 14 in which the activity of the enzyme threonine dehydratase (ilvA) is reduced or eliminated as a result of deletion of all or a part of the nucleotide sequence encoding said ilvA in said microorganism.

17. (previously presented) The transformed microorganism according to Claim 14 wherein said microorganism is *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

18. (currently amended) A method for the production of L-valine comprising the step of culturing a microorganism transformed with a nucleotide sequence encoding dihydroxy acid dehydratase (ilvD) ~~ilvD~~ and ~~a nucleotide sequence encoding ilvBNC~~ nucleotide sequences encoding acetohydroxy acid synthase and isomeroreductase (ilvBNC), under conditions wherein said microorganism produces L-valine, wherein said microorganism is a *Corynebacterium* species.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein said nucleotide sequence encoding ilvD comprises the portion of SEQ ID NO: 1 encoding ilvD.

20. (currently amended) The method of claim 18 wherein the activity of threonine dehydratase (ilvA) ~~ilvA~~ in said microorganism is reduced or eliminated as a result of deletion of all or a part of the nucleotide sequence encoding said ilvA in said microorganism.

21. (currently amended) The method of claim 18 wherein the activity of at least one enzyme in said microorganism selected from the group consisting of ~~panB, panC, panE and panD~~ ketopantoate hydroxymethyl transferase (panB), pantothenate ligase (panC), ketopantoic acid reductase (panE) and aspartate decarboxylase (panD) is reduced or eliminated as a result of deletion of all or a part of the nucleotide sequence encoding said enzyme in said microorganism.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said at least one enzyme is panB or panC.

23. (previously presented) The method of claim 22 wherein said at least one enzyme is panB and panC.

24. (currently amended) The method of claim 20 wherein the activity of at least one enzyme in said microorganism selected from the group consisting of ~~panB, panC, panE and panD~~ ketopantoate hydroxymethyl transferase (panB), pantothenate ligase (panC), ketopantoic acid reductase (panE) and aspartate decarboxylase (panD) is reduced or eliminated as a result of deletion of all or a part of the nucleotide sequence encoding said enzyme in said microorganism.

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 24 wherein said at least one enzyme is panB or panC.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 25 wherein said at least one enzyme is panB and panC.

27. (canceled)

28. (canceled)

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein said *Corynebacterium* species is *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

30. (currently amended) A method for the production of L-valine comprising the step of culturing a microorganism in which the activity of dihydroxy acid dehydratase (ilvD) ~~ilvD~~ is increased as a result of mutation of the endogenous gene encoding ~~ilvD~~ by increased expression of the ilvD nucleotide sequence encoding ilvD, under conditions wherein said microorganism produces L-valine, wherein said microorganism is a ~~microorganism that can produce L-valine from glucose, sucrose, lactose, fructose, maltose, molasses, starch, or cellulose or from glycerin or ethanol~~ a *Corynebacterium* species.

31. (currently amended) The method of claim 30 wherein the acetoxy acid synthase and isomeroeductase (ilvBNC) ~~ilvBNC~~ activity of said microorganism is increased as a result of mutation of the endogenous gene encoding said ilvBN or ilvC or both.

32. (currently amended) The method of claim 30 wherein said microorganism is transformed with a nucleotide sequence encoding acetoxy acid synthase and isomeroeductase (ilvBNC) ~~ilvBNC~~.

33. (currently amended) The method of claim 30 wherein the activity of threonine dehydratase (ilvA) ~~ilvA~~ in said microorganism is reduced or eliminated as a result of deletion of all or a part of the nucleotide sequence encoding said ilvA in said microorganism.

34. (currently amended) The method of claim 31 wherein the activity of threonine dehydratase (ilvA) ~~ilvA~~ in said microorganism is reduced or eliminated as a result of deletion of all or a part of the nucleotide sequence encoding said ilvA in said microorganism.

35. (currently amended) The method of claim 34 wherein the activity of at least one enzyme in said microorganism selected from the group consisting of ~~panB, panC, panE and panD~~ ketopantoate hydroxymethyl transferase (panB), pantothenate ligase (panC), ketopantoic acid reductase (panE) and aspartate decarboxylase (panD) is reduced or eliminated as a result of deletion of all or a part of the nucleotide sequence encoding said enzyme in said microorganism.

36. (previously presented) The method of claim 35 wherein said at least one enzyme is panB or panC.

37. (previously presented) The method of claim 36 wherein said at least one enzyme is panB and panC.

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38. (canceled)

39. (canceled)

40. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~39~~ 30 wherein said *Corynebacterium* species is *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.